

**St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S.**

**Cootehall,**

**Boyle.**

**Roll No.19720P**

**071-9667264**

**[www.cootehallns.com](http://www.cootehallns.com)**

August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Dear Parents.

Please find information below for Hand Hygiene Etiquette/ Respiratory Hygiene Etiquette/ Social Distancing inside and on yard to manage the risk of spread of COVID-19 in our school.

***a. Wash your Hands Frequently***

Regular hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of COVID-19.

Posters are displayed at each hand washing station throughout the school showing effective hand washing technique.

We will follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing: Pupils and staff WILL perform hand hygiene:

- On arrival at school.
- Before eating or drinking.
- After using the toilet.
- After playing outdoors.
- When their hands are physically dirty.
- When they cough or sneeze.

For further advice from HSE on how to wash your hands the following link will be helpful: <https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

Also here is a link for a video on how to wash your hands from the HSE :  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EfQvLT0sKNc>

***b. Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitisers***

All members of our school community will practise and actively promote effective hand hygiene at home and at school. Hand hygiene can also be achieved by the use of a hand sanitisers (when hands are clean).

- Staff and pupils must understand why hand hygiene is important as well as when and how to wash their hands.
- Hand sanitisers are installed, with appropriate signage, at each outside entrance door, in each classroom and at appropriate locations throughout the school.
- All persons entering the school building must perform hand hygiene using hand sanitiser provided.

**Frequency of Hand Hygiene: Pupils and staff will perform hand hygiene:**

- On arrival at school.
- Before eating or drinking.
- After using the toilet.
- After playing outdoors.
- When their hands are physically dirty.
- When they cough or sneeze.

***c. Practice respiratory hygiene***

All members of our school community will practise and actively promote good respiratory hygiene at home and at school as this will help protect people around us from viruses such as flu and Covid-19.

Good respiratory hygiene entails:

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze.</li> <li>• Disposing of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin.</li> <li>• Bins will be emptied at regular intervals.</li> </ul> |
|---|

By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and Covid-19.

Good hygiene practices and washing your hands properly and regularly can help stop the spread of the virus. It is, therefore, crucial that all staff adhere to this advice and adopt the following practices as strictly as possible.

***d. Avoid Touching Eyes, Nose and Mouth***

Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose, or mouth.

***e. Do***

- Wash your hands properly and often
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze
- Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

*f. Do Not*

- Touch your eyes, nose, or mouth if your hands are not clean
- Share objects that touch your mouth – for example, bottles, cups, cutlery, etc.

**Students inability to attend school due to Covid-19**

- Pupils who are unable to attend school on medical grounds, due to Covid-19, must provide the school with a letter/report from their GP/Consultant stating that they cannot attend on health grounds.
- In the absence of medical certification of non-attendance, the school is obliged by law to implement the terms of The Education Welfare Act as normal.

*g. Physical Distancing in the classroom and outside in the yard.*

Physical distancing is recommended to reduce the spread of infection in the school.

Physical distancing will be usefully applied in our school allowing for some flexibility when needed. It will be applied in a practical way that recognises that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue. Physical distancing in our school will look different across the various ages and stages of learning.

It is recognised that it is not always possible for staff to maintain physical distance from pupils and it is not appropriate that they would always be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the pupil i.e. if a child sustains an injury and requires first aid. In this case staff will be wearing face coverings and gloves.

However, where possible staff will maintain a minimum of 1m distance and where possible 2m.

**Staff will be wearing face coverings in the classroom when 2m distancing cannot be achieved.**

**Staff will also take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down.**

All adult visitors to the school, as scheduled by appointment, MUST maintain a 2m distance from school staff and wear suitable face coverings.

In 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> class the students will be divided into Pods, where there will be 1m distance between individual Pods within the Class Bubble and also 1m between individuals in the pod.

In 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> class it is not possible to have 1m between individuals due to class size and room size so the class will be divided into Pods and these will be at least 1m distance.

In the Junior rooms we will divide the classes into Pods and separate each Pod by 1m.

At breaktime all classrooms will have a separate area in the school yard to play each day. These areas will be rotated on a regular basis. When in their designated outside area students will be allowed to play with any students from their **classroom** only.

When returning to class at the end of breaktime each classroom will use a separate designated entrance to enter their classroom.

#### Toilet facilities

All classrooms will have a designated toilet block. In each toilet block there will be designated boys and girl's toilet. The Board of Management have arranged the instalment of an extra hand washing basin, soap dispenser and paper hand towel dispenser in each of the toilet blocks

**Note: Guidance on the physical distancing requirements will be informed by public health advice for schools and will be updated, as necessary.**

If you have any queries, please e-mail the school at [cootehallns@gmail.com](mailto:cootehallns@gmail.com).

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

*Cian Duffy,*

Principal.

*Cora Regan,*

On behalf of the Board of Management.